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764 carried off by the grave-diggers. None but an outcast would venture to do such a thing.

By this time, or, if the death occurred at night, in the early morning, the band has arrived, and commences to play dirges in front of the house. The Sula-gandi monks greatly disapprove of this practice, as savouring of ostentation, and their followers therefore often dispense with the band, as do many Burmans in the large English towns. But otherwise the band is always engaged, and plays on steadily till the funeral takes place. Almost invariably, too, one or more of [793] the yahans from the monastery come along and stay in the house, their presence being invaluable in keeping away evil spirits, who might otherwise loiter about the place. The monk may or may not deliver a discourse, just as he sees fit. The body is then put into the coffin, which is a very flimsy kind of affair, ordinarily made of let-pan (*Bombax malabaricum*), a very light and porous kind of wood not unlike deal, or sometimes of eng tree (*Dipterocarpus tuberculatus*). This is fastened down roughly with any kind of nails that come to hand. A number of the relatives and friends now come to condole and lend their assistance in making and ornamenting the bier and hearse, most of them bringing presents of money or food with them. A few years ago a very [476] meritorious society called Upathaka was started in Rangoon, the object of which was to provide decent and honourable burial for all members. The actual society did not last very long, but it served to show that the old feeling of mutual help still existed. At no time, however, have the Burmans been backward in this meitswe a-paung a-paw, which is one of the thirty-eight points insisted on in the Mingala-thut, the most favourite sermon of the Lord Buddha's. Friends and neighbours troop in with presents of a few pice, baskets of rice, meat, fruit, tobacco, betel, and material for decorating the bier, so that a man who in his lifetime never had a rupee to bless himself with, receives in Lower Burma a funeral grand enough to bring everybody connected with it under the scope of the sumptuary laws, if it were held in King Thibaw's territory.

The body is kept a longer or shorter time according to the station of the deceased. If he was rich, the preparation

If the umbrella falls down it indicates that the spirit has departed and cannot return. The person who performs this ritual must not talk to anyone en route to the cemetery. 764

On the seventh day a ceremony takes place. The monks come to the house to eat and chant prayers. They are given offerings for their own use and a special tray containing white thread. The monks hold the thread, which symbolizes good, while they chant. The people present are seated before the monks, repeating the prayers and precepts after them. The deceased person is supposed to be sitting on the mat prepared for him and benefiting from this ceremony. Then the people are fed, the monks depart, and the influences of death are considered to be banished. The thread is kept in the house. 764 769

Graves are not visited, nor is there any upkeep of the cemetery, for folk belief has it that the tidying of graves will cause more people to die. The dead are commemorated by the meritorious act of feasting the Buddhist monks.

Associations

Bus Union. Owners of buses plying between Tadagale and Rangoon are organized into a union. In terms of its functions, this organization might be more fittingly termed a mutual protective and insurance association. These are: to prevent outsiders from infringing on their route and competing with them; payment of damages in case of accidents between members' buses and other vehicles or persons; payment of any costs of litigation that arise in connection with accidents; and maintenance of a repair shop and mechanic in the village. Members of the union pay an initial sum to join, plus monthly dues and a small toll fee for each trip that is made. 441 444

Peasants Union. The Tadagale Peasants Union is a constituent body of the All Burma Peasants Union and operates directly under the Insein Division of the parent organization. Some fifty to sixty households in Tadagale are members. When the head of a family or household joins, the union regards all its members as union members. In theory, meetings are supposed to occur once a month, but in fact take place at irregular intervals, whenever a problem arises that is considered sufficiently important to warrant a meeting. Commonly this is a dispute between members over land. If opinion remains divided after considerable discussion of a dispute or other issue, the union meeting votes by written ballot. 467 427 185

The more long-run aims of the Peasants Union concern rent and taxes of cultivators. Protests and petitions are sent to the government when it is felt taxes are too high. The union was characterized as 'an organization that is against the landlords.' At the time of our research, its aim was to reduce the landowners' share of the produce to one-third from two-thirds. The union also favored land nationalization, under which it was believed rent would be paid in a just amount to the government. Just where the Peasants Union fitted in with existing political party programs and alignments in the country at large it was not, for various reasons, feasible to investigate.

Ceremonial Assistance Groups. For purposes of rendering help at such ceremonies as weddings, funerals and initiations, the villagers are divided into informal groups. These are: men's group; married women's group; and unmarried girls' group. The men's group does the heavier tasks, such as shopping and carrying firewood, erecting ceremonial structures, and preparing 575 476

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large amounts of food. The married women prepare food, serve, and entertain the guests, while the unmarried girls assist them. If a ceremony involves a procession, the unmarried girls bear the gifts which are invariably taken to the monks on such occasions.

These 'groups' are so informal and loosely organized that in the strict sociological sense they should not be so designated; rather, they are simply the conventional lines along which cooperation takes place and labor is divided, in a spirit of mutual aid, whenever a family sponsors a ceremony -- an occasion involving much work. Each is willing to help, for when his own family sponsors an event, similar assistance will be expected and forthcoming.

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Education. In addition to the Buddhist monastic schools, to be discussed in the next chapter, there is a small secular school in the village. This is operated on a voluntary basis by a middle-aged schoolmaster, a widower, who migrated, together with his daughter, to Tadagale two years ago. It is his hope that eventually the school will be incorporated into the regular school system, as compulsory education is gradually extended to the country. The school is financed wholly by voluntary contributions. The village headman personally contributes ten rupees per month, his brother gives a like amount, and the Bus Union donates five rupees. From this income of twenty-five rupees per month ($5.25) the schoolmaster pays five rupees for his house rent and provides blackboard chalk and his own books and pencils. On what remains, plus a little profit he derives from maintaining a small shop in his house, he must support his daughter and himself. But he is confident that once compulsory education is extended to Tadagale, his sacrificial efforts of the present will be rewarded by a regular appointment at Rs. 100 per month, an expanded program of instruction, and perhaps the services of an assistant. For the present he operates the school without any responsibilities to superiors, devising his own curriculum and teaching according to his own methods. The schoolmaster was himself once a student at a normal school in Moulmein.

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About eighty children attend the school with varying degrees of regularity. The average daily attendance is about sixty. The schoolmaster feels that many more children of school-age living in the community should attend, but finds that parents are reluctant to send their children. Some feel they are needed for household and field labor; others prefer what they regard as the stricter environment of the monastic school, with its great emphasis upon religion and correct conduct. The schoolmaster deplores the ignorance and negative attitudes of villagers concerning education, and their unwillingness to contribute financially to the maintenance of his school.

Instruction is given in five grades or 'standards' as they are called in Burma. These are termed 1B, 1A, 2, 3, and 4.

Standard 1B is equivalent to the kindergarten of the pre-World War II schools. The schoolmaster has divided the class into two sections, one for the children of seven to eight years who already can read to some extent, the other for the younger ones of four to six who cannot. According to the rules of the government schools six years is the minimum school age, but the schoolmaster in Tadagale is not bound by such regulations. He teaches these two groups of kindergarteners according to their own levels and at the pace which he thinks appropriate. They learn the alphabet and simple numbers at first, later moving on to reading and spelling. No regular allocation of time to different subjects is possible, since the schoolmaster must teach this and four other classes without any assistance.

426 593 or her daughters or sons who are financially well-to-do. U Myaing's sister who lives in Rangoon has given help to the eldest daughter by housing her near her cheroot-rolling job. The pattern of mutual aid among the relatives is strongly developed among the Burmese. "A tree will support a thousand birds" emphasises the importance of the relative who makes good for the rest of the family.

Relationship of Family to Community and State

602 621 A large portion of the Pathwe community were related to U Myaing. Consequently many reciprocal activities fell within the family group. Most of the activities were prescribed by virtue of being a member of the community rather than by kinship ties. Such activities include cooperation in house raisings, funerals, marriage festivals, SHIN PIU ceremonies where the family involved needs help. Unpleasant occasions such as funerals demand everyone's attendance if not financial participation. 602 621 •476 [342] On pleasant occasions the participants are apt to be one's friends and relatives. When someone builds a small house or puts a new thatch roof on, the other villagers come to help. He does not have to pay the workers anything or even feed them. He has only to cook and prepare for them the raw foods and chillies, onions, etc., which each one brings for himself. This statement, however, holds true only when small houses are built. Regular carpenters have to be hired to build the big ones. U Myaing frequently helped to build other people's houses - small houses that could be completed in a day. Help of this nature is offered without asking.

764 621 476 When a person dies in the village, the villagers all go to the house and certain elders help to bathe and dress the corpse and place it on the bed, where it may be kept anywhere from three to seven days before being taken out and buried. The ground for burial is bought at the ceremony for the price of one pice. Now, in keeping with the general inflation, the price has risen to one anna. The grave is dug by the young men's group. The young men of the village carry the bier, or pull the bullock cart on which the coffin rests, and dig the grave. They also provide the orchestra. For performances on the night of the death and the day after a Burmese orchestra is engaged at the rate of Rs. 80/- to Rs. 100/-. The various visitors who come to condole with

the bereaved bring with them gifts of money and in this way seek to help them to defray the funeral expenses of which the funeral feast held 7 days after the death is most expensive. Sometimes these visitors are so generous that the householder does not need to contribute anything at all. Some people, however, prefer to reserve the right to pay for burial expenses of someone in the family, and put out an announcement requesting neighbours to refrain from making monetary contributions. 764 621 476

The community activities in the refugee camp are mainly of an economic nature - discussed in the section on "Work". The solidarity of the village is lacking and the feelings of obligation and responsibility beyond the basic economic ones are absent. 621 722

In Pathae there are ethnic groups other than the Burmese. There are a few Karens, Indians of Madrasi affiliation, as well as a few Chinese who run stores. The attitude of the family toward these other groups are reflected in the following interview: (Note: the concept of "religion" is used here as meaning "general way of life." 621 563 186

Q. "Does U Kyaing know about other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism? If so, what is his attitude towards them.

A. "I don't understand them well. We are with our own religion. We are country folk. We understand our religion only. We don't understand other religions.

Q. "What is your attitude towards other racial groups living in the village?

A. "I don't hold any positive attitude. I harbour no evil thoughts. We hold them to be the same as we are.

Q. "Would you like to go back to live among the Karens you spoke of just now?

A. (D.A.Z.) "Of course not. Lots of Burmese were left behind. We wouldn't dare to live among the Karens."
(U.M.) "Some people do not dare to live among the Karens, but we do."
(D.A.Z.) U.M.)"We don't have enemies."
(D.A.Z.) "There are Karens who are friendly with us."
(U.M.) "Say that we lived together. We lived together."
(D.A.Z.)"Though we have no enemies we feel afraid. In the present turmoil and confusion people no longer know each other."

Q. " Do the Karens differ from you in religion?"

A. (U.M.) "Our religions do not differ. The religion of Karens in our place and our religion do not differ. It is Buddhism."

phongyis have to draw lots for these.

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There are thirty days during which the KAHTEIN ceremony can be held - from the full moon of Thadingyut to the full moon of Tasaungmon When the phongyis have been given HSOON, the ceremony is over. But preparations have to be made four or five days ahead for building the equipment, for cooking the food, for rehearsing the play to be put up by the youngmen, etc.

The Tagu month festival is a religious festival and is celebrated in their village at the HSU TAUNG PYE pagoda. Collections are taken, and people donate from Rs. 2/- or Rs. 5/- right up to Rs. 300/- each. A B&T troupe is engaged for the occasion, and they are paid at the rate of Rs. 150/- or Rs. 200/- a night for six or seven nights. This festival takes place on the full moon of the month of Tagu. Beginning from the eve of the full moon, people start coming to the pagoda bringing gifts of fruit, PAUK PAUK HSOTE trifle, toffees, bread, cheroots, betel boxes CHIN THOKE trifle, etc., and these people have to be fed too. U Myaing donated between forty and sixty rupees; while people who are rich donate between three hundred and four hundred rupees. (U Myaing's village of Pathwe is divided by a fork in the river into three sub-villages, and when collections are taken they are only confined to one's own side of the river.) Enough food is prepared to feed three or four thousand people. Butter is bought by the kerosene tin, ripe bananas, fried fish, pork, etc., and the guests are fed till everyone is satisfied. About twenty baskets of rice have to be boiled by about forty to fifty people.

The guests are fed in three rest houses, each holding fifty people at a time. Even so, there are so many guests that some people have to return home without having eaten anything at all, and even though a lot of food still remain. The guests who come are both Karens and Burmans, and when they come they sometimes bring along cows or horses which have decorations and gifts hung on them. Anyone who so desires can go and hang his gift on to the animal as well.

Everyone contributes his or her labour. It is not good to hold back. When there is a festival or a ceremony in the KLAING, all the families lock up their houses and go over to help. Even fish coming down to the IN are not picked up til the festival is over. Everyone helps in getting up festivals. Burmans and Karens all come to help at some household which intends to give charity on a grand scale.

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U Myaing's Shifting Relationship to Buddhism

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In an interview U Myaing was questioned as to his relationship to Buddhism as a "taker of lives" (fisherman). His sense of guilt in Pantanaw where he fished and relief from this in the camp is given below verbatim from the interview.

42. Q. Would you tell U Myaing that I as a foreigner understand very little about Buddhism but I've heard that the fisherman who take lives of the fish are regarded unfavourably. Ask him if this is true.
A. (U.'s.) There are the 5 SIKKHA (commandments - Pali: KARAN - to do). Thou shalt not take the life of others. Thou shalt not wrong the wife and offspring of another. Abstain from intoxicants and from stealing the property of others. We have to observe these. The Buddha has preached it.
Q. Isn't U Myaing, in working the IN, taking the lives of the fish?
A. Yes, I am taking the lives of the fish. I have to do it to get food - to make a living.
Q. But you do not wish to take life?